



University of Hawaii at Manoa

Environmental Center
Crawford 317 • 2550 Campus Road
Honolulu, Hawaii 96822
Telephone (808) 948-7361

RL:0792A

HB 34 HD 1 RELATING TO WATER

Statement for
House Committee on
Water and Land Use Development
Public Hearing - March 1, 1988

By
Jacquelin Miller, Environmental Center
Doak Cox, former Director Environmental Center
C. Anna Ulaszewski, Environmental Center
Steven Armann, Environmental Center

HB 34 HD 1 would create a water resource special management fund.

Our statement on this bill does not represent an institutional position of the University of Hawaii.

HB 34 HD 1 reflects major amendments to the original bill (HB 34) and in particular addresses most of the concerns and recommendations provided at the earlier hearing on HB 34.

We fully concur with the intent of this legislation and generally concur with the amendments. However, we would like to call your attention to provisions of HD 1 that may need further clarification or modification.

Section 2 (page 2, line 17) defines a "Hydrographic area" pursuant to Section 174C-203. We were unable to locate this referenced section. Section 174C-41 refers to the designation of water management areas and perhaps this is the intended reference.

At present HRS 174C-3 refers to "Hydrologic units" and to "water Management Areas". Both these terms are defined in terms of areas with particular water related attributes or management needs. To add a third term, "hydrographic area" proposed in HB 34 HD 1 seems likely to result in confusion. We suggest that the definition of "hydrographic area" should be more precise and that perhaps a different title should be considered.

Included in the watershed management duties proposed under HB 34 HD 1 (page 3, lines 11-12) is the duty to "control and eradicate noxious weeds and remove ungulates from important watersheds". Action by the Water Commission to control and eradicate noxious weeds and remove ungulates should be coordinated with other state departments or agencies having similar responsibilities. For example, the Departments of Land and Natural Resources and Agriculture. Coordination of efforts should be encouraged if not required.

Paragraph (1) on page 5, line 23, directs the commission to establish a comprehensive plan for the management of all designated hydrographic areas and further specifies that such plan include among other things: (1) specific guidelines for the carrying capacity of each hydrographic area.

Carrying capacity is a term originally developed for dealing with agricultural uses of lands. For example, it is used in defining the number of cows that can be grazed on a given area over some period of time, without destruction of the pasture. If the term is to be used in the management of watersheds, the definition of what is intended to be "carried" is needed. We suggest that the term sustainable yield would be more appropriate than carrying capacity when dealing with water management plans.

Page 6, lines 11-13, direct the commission to establish a local advisory group on each island composed of "consumers of water". Since "consumers of water" would include any person, we suggest that the criteria for participation in the advisory group be redefined to include individuals with special expertise related to hydrology, resource conservation or related watershed resource management fields.